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No. 448

THE BRIDE AND THE BURGLAR

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT

BY

FLORENCE LEWIS SPEARE

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Price 30 Cents

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SAMUEL FRENCH, 28-30 West 38th Street, New York City
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CHARACTERS

THE BRIDE.
HER HUSBAND.
THE BURGLAR.

SCENE: *The interior of a living-room in their new, unoccupied bungalow home. In the suburbs, and just following the honeymoon.*

TIME: *Spring. Near midnight and in a heavy downpour of rain.*

COSTUMES

The bride wears a simple dark traveling frock or coat-suit under a slicker—but, like any lady, she is proud of her feet—and in spite of travel, in spite of rain, she wears very smart, thin slippers with very high French heels. Her feet must be shod conspicuously, in the last cry of smart fashion.

Her husband in traveling tweeds, automobile cap, coat, gauntlets.

The burglar wears an old slouch hat, old but not shabby clothes, rubber-soled low shoes—or sneakers. Small black mask, revolver, dark lantern, file.

STAGE SET

The living-room, scattered with pieces of boxed furniture and bric-a-brac. Atmosphere of "just moving on" must be clearly indicated. Windows, right and left, at the back of the room. They are boarded up on the inside. The entrance to the house is right-lower. Across from the entrance is a stair leading to the upper rooms. A turn in the stairway shows a wide landing, and then the steps disappear as they continue on above. There is a door leading to the kitchen, etc., back of the stairs.

A clutter of wedding gifts, tied with smashing white bows, cards attached. A roll of Navajo rugs; a brand new refrigerator. *This refrigerator must stand conspicuously placed between the windows.* A flask of alcohol, a chafing-dish placed on top of refrigerator. A tea-table, a couple of wicker chairs. Sideboard, containing linen, knives, forks and dishes. This stands near the stairs. Down stage, conspicuously placed, an ornate chest containing the family silver. This is the groom's gift to the bride. The action of the play centers about it. A statue of Venus of Milo—a common and ornate colored glass vase or cheap gilt vase, with its card attached by a piece of ordinary string. A small clock which strikes the hours. Loot for the burglar scattered around in bureau drawers, under the stairs, near the sideboard—in various parts of the room so as to give him an opportunity to keep at work while stepping about. Eatables for a supper must be in the ice-box. Among them must be bananas. Burglar alarm.

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Before the curtain rises Mendelssohn's wedding-march rings out triumphantly. The strains mingle with the sounds of a terrific storm of wind and rain. An automobile is heard approaching. The horn blows as it comes to a full stop outside the bungalow.

Curtain rises on a dark stage. A gust of wind almost blows the door off its hinges. The bride laughs and scampers in, gasping a little—but too happy to care that she is lashed about by a storm. Lights on. Husband apparently has touched the electric button which controls the house lights. *It is in the woodwork just inside the door.* The bride shakes the rain off—examines each shoe critically.

The bride speaks: "My lovely French shoes escaped mud—and *everything*." She laughs with a happy crow. Husband is having his fun dashing in and out with small baggage. And the storm rages and the rain pours down. Bride busily wiping off her gay little shoes all this time. Uses her nice little white handkerchief and soils it—but doesn't care. A flash of lightning.

The Bride and the Burglar

BRIDE. (*Speaks in the dark*) Oh, what a dreadful storm!

GROOM. (*Coming in*) It's a deluge! (*Lights switched on reveals the BRIDE daintily holding small leather vanity bag, while the GROOM struggles in under a load of traveling paraphernalia—hat-boxes, luncheon hamper, rugs, extra wraps, etc.*)

BRIDE. (*Looking about her*) What a slick little place!

GROOM. (*Throwing down luggage*) Like it, sweetheart?

BRIDE. It's a *love* of a place! A perfect duck—darling.

GROOM. (*Grins*) Honest Injun?

BRIDE. I'm just crazy about it! (*They embrace.*)

GROOM. But you haven't really seen it yet, sweetheart!

BRIDE. (*In his arms*) Oh, yes, I did. The stairs are so cute!

GROOM. And that door leads to the kitchen—and dining-room. And you go on to another door which opens into the garden! Your garden—my garden! You plant roses and I plant vegetables.

BRIDE. Yes! Everything but onions! (*They embrace.*) I'm just crazy about planting! Won't it be love among the roses!

GROOM. You've said it! Sure, you won't regret living way out in the suburbs?

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BRIDE. Of course not! I love nature! Besides, I am going to have all my girl friends out every week-end! They are terribly anxious to feel how it seems to be waked up by the song of crickets.

GROOM. You beautiful thing! We'll introduce 'em to hoeing, and picking June bugs; and maybe they will like it so well, you'll get all your friends to marry and build nice little bungalows next door to ours.

BRIDE. Not that close! I mean to devote all my life hereafter to you alone, darling.

GROOM. Sweetheart! (*They embrace.*) Our lives will be one continuous honeymoon. As we sit together beside the open fire I shall tell you over and over again that you are the sweetest, the dearest, most beautiful, most adorable girl in all the world!

BRIDE. How perfectly slick! (*They embrace.*) But we must be practical, darling. Let's count and see if all our presents came. I tried to be very tactful with mother—but you know, maids may have overlooked something——

GROOM. (*Stooping to examine tag*) Here are the rugs I got from dad. You know he didn't treat us half bad—when you think of everything he did——

BRIDE. He's the most attractive man I know—beside you!

GROOM. He was radiant when I told him I was going to marry you.

BRIDE. He's devoted to me—I know—— (*Gives little shriek.*) Horrors!

GROOM. What's the matter?

BRIDE. (*Holds hideous vase at arm's length*) This freak! My Aunt Julia's gift.

GROOM. That rich, aristocratic old lady living at the Ritz?

BRIDE. Yes. Isn't it ghastly. I just know it was parked for *ages* in a five and ten cent store.

GROOM. Smash it, dear.

BRIDE. I don't dare. We must remember I expect to be her heir.

GROOM. Stick it up in the attic and bring it down when you see her car at the door—and then place it where her eyes will light upon it! Flower-holder—or something.

BRIDE. (*Murmurs*) You've a wonderful brain! You really have.

GROOM. Nothing marvelous. (*But he grins delightedly.*) Those wicker chairs are for our porch.

BRIDE. And there's the wicker tea-table. And—oh, look! Here's the chafing-dish our cook gave me! (*Dashes to ice-chest where it stands.*) A flash inside! (*Sniffs.*) Filled! All ready for me to cook our first dinner together.

GROOM. Great! I'm aging for that food right now. (*Picks up clock.*) And say, darling, this little thing is a bit of all right.

BRIDE. It's perfectly killing the way people give clocks! At least we escaped what always looks to be a bankrupt sale of them—and common-place lamps! Honey! Look at that adorable Venus!

GROOM. Your art school friend's gift?

BRIDE. Yes—isn't it languid-looking?

GROOM. Must have heavy ankles! Her desire to cover 'em is so evident.

BRIDE. I love her. She is so bored-looking. (*GROOM is dragging his luggage about, looks puzzled.*) That ice-chest has to be dragged out. It can hold our lunch-basket things—I have a whole lot of good things in there, sweetie. When you think how hectic it was when we left the hotel—I think I did pretty well—— (*GROOM counting pieces, scratches his ear, frowns.* *BRIDE is busy peering into the ice-box.*) I sent a hotel boy to buy the luncheon while I was pinning my veil on. (*She looks about her again.*) We did pretty well in wedding gifts.

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But everyone said I was the most popular girl in our set. (*She laughs.*)

GROOM. So was I—until I got engaged.

BRIDE. (*Coming to him*) Darling! How perfectly pathetic—— Why *did* you ever marry me?

GROOM. I was only fooling, sweetheart. I was not so attractive—as some!

BRIDE. Because, when a girl fished for compliments, you never bit!

GROOM. I bet you had to listen to compliments all the time.

BRIDE. Pessimist! (*They embrace.*) I never really cared for anybody but you—dearest.

GROOM. Same here. (*They embrace.*)

BRIDE. (*Peeping round*) Gracious! What is in that long, “hope-chest” looking box?

GROOM. (*Grins*) That, darling, contains the family silver.

BRIDE. (*Shrieks*) No!

GROOM. Yes—I found that box—it looked so aristocratic I bought it for your room—and then I locked up your silver in it.

BRIDE. But—darling—suppose the house had been broken into? I’m just paralyzed to think what might have happened to my silver——

GROOM. Nothing could happen, as the silver was not here until to-day. I planned to have dad open the place and set that chest in here. My bride must see her husband’s gift to her the moment she entered her little home.

BRIDE. You dear heart! Thank you so much! (*They embrace.*) Listen! (*Seriously.*) You recall the story of Ruth and Naomi? (*He looks blank.*) Well, it’s in the Bible. Ruth says to Naomi, “May all kinds of dreadful things happen to me if ever we two become separated—one from the other.”

GROOM. Meaning?

BRIDE. *This!* May all sorts of dreadful and ter-

rible things happen to me if ever I permit this silver to be separated from me. (*They embrace.*) It means so much—it really does—for had I been more thoughtful and not quite so greedy—and not insisted on having that beautiful silver service—we might have had a bigger car!

GROOM. (*Laughs*) It's the biggest car I can get into our garage!

BRIDE. My dear! But you really ought to discuss money matters with me.

GROOM. Want to take tucks in my pockets already! (*Kisses her.*) It's all right—and now that you have your confession off your mind—hear what a wretch I am. I find I have left your grip down at the depot.

BRIDE. My goodness! Really——

GROOM. Don't worry—I know just where it is standing——

BRIDE. But, darling! How hectic! I simply cannot live in these things till morning!

GROOM. There are some of my things——

BRIDE. (*Shrieks—covers ears*) You're joking!

GROOM. It's all right. I beg your pardon, dear—I'll have it to you in a jiffy.

BRIDE. I'm frantic! We left in such a rush at the last—— Everything went in that bag. Even my most bewildering frock—the one you love—— Oh, I can't sleep.

GROOM. (*Hustling into coat, etc.*) I thought I had the durn thing—I beg your pardon——

BRIDE. It's all right, darling. (*Kisses him.*)

GROOM. You won't be scared here—alone, precious?

BRIDE. No! I'll be fixing a nice supper for you.

GROOM. Fine! I'll set the little ole clock! You can be counting the ticks till I return!

BRIDE. (*Accepts clock*) How thrilling.

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GROOM. When you hear the chimes striking *ten*—I'll be at the door.

BRIDE. Stunning! We shall have our first reunion to-night.

GROOM. That's the idea. (*Kisses.*) This is the room! Ten is the hour! Farewell—till we meet again——

BRIDE. Don't ride too fast—but hurry back home! (*They embrace.*)

GROOM. Trust me for that, dear! (*Kiss again.*) It's some storm! (*Opens door—rush of storm beats in. Closes it. Settles his collar and cap more firmly.*)

BRIDE. Do you think it's growing worse?

GROOM. No, dear. It's mostly wind. Good-bye. (*Embrace.*)

BRIDE. Darling, take care of yourself. Don't skid!

GROOM. I'll be careful. (*Opens door. Storm howls.*) I'm off. (*Door bangs shut.*)

BRIDE. Where does all the wind come from? (*Door opens.*)

GROOM. Sylvia! If you get frightened, the telephone is connected. Right there. At the turn of the stairs.

BRIDE. All right, dear.

GROOM. Bye!

BRIDE. Bye. (*Door bangs.*) I'll start and unpack that food. (*Crosses to ice-box.*)

GROOM. (*At door again*) And—Sylvia! There's a burglar alarm set. Don't touch the windows or it will wake the dead. Bye. (*Bangs door.*)

BRIDE. I'll remember! I shall need a table! (*Door opens.*)

GROOM. Oh, Sweetheart! (*Storm howls.*)

BRIDE. You—again?

GROOM. I forgot to kiss you—— (*They embrace again.*)

BRIDE. Shall I go along with you, dear?

GROOM. Not this trip, flatterer—I want that supper when I get back. (*Reaches door once more.*) Sure you won't be timid?

BRIDE. No, no! But I am frantic till I see my bag! Run along—you adorable lamb.

GROOM. I'm gone this time, sure. (*Embrace.*) Bye! (*Storm shrieks and lashes about the house. Lady hums snatch of the wedding march.*)

BRIDE. Poor darling will be so cold and wet! He will want a lot to eat! (*Humming, she stoops and opens the ice-chest door—a long side it is. Her back is toward the house-door. Storm lashes and shakes the place. It is at the height of its fury. She raises her head suddenly and listens to it. Flash of lightning. She looks at the windows—peers out in kitchen.*) I'm glad everything is snug inside—Glory! what a storm! (*Down swoops the wind with a shriek; lightning flashes, rain pours with a rattle on the house—and the lights in the room go out. Enter the BURGLAR. BRIDE smothers a cry—looks straight into the bull's-eye, slides to the floor, her back against ice-box door, her feet thrust straight out in front of her. BURGLAR swings his light about—moves stealthily. Lady covers an outcry. BURGLAR stands.*)

BURGLAR. Wot the 'ell! (*Switches off his light—pads softly in darkness. When close to the BRIDE he turns light on. She is cowering away from him, against the ice-box. He covers her with a revolver; clicks it. Speaks in sullen, muttered tone.*) Don't move. Who are yuh, huh? (*She wets her lips, gazes straight up at him, numbed.*) Who are yuh?

LADY. (*After pause—faintly*) Who do you take me for? One of the family?

(*The reply is given to kill time, to give her a chance to cover her fright, rather than that she is aware*

of what she has said. She expects to be shot any minute.)

BURGLAR. (*After slight pause, advances, regards her, taking in all details of her attire. She cowers away from him*) Well, say, I thought yuh wuz, 'till I got a look at yer rags. When I opened the door and saw yuh squattin' there, thought yuh wuz the lady of the house fer sure. (*Grins.*) One of me own fambly, huh?

LADY. (*Grabs at this chance*) Why, yes! I'm a burglar, too.

BURGLAR. How long yuh bin here?

LADY. (*Naively*) Oh—just a few minutes.

BURGLAR. I didn't see no lights from the road, so I thought the crib wuz empty. (*Chuckles.*) Gee, yuh mus' a bin hungry, beatin' fer the feed box first thing.

LADY. (*Gaining confidence*) I am hungry. (*Dives in ice-chest, hauls out banana.*) Have a banana?

BURGLAR. (*Emphatically*) Naw! None of yer dago feed fer mine. If yuh hadn't bin so busy, yuh might a heard me prowlin' round— (*Sudden idea.*) Say! How'd yuh get in?

LADY. (*Banana poised in mid-air*) Oh—I got in with a pass key!

BURGLAR. Gee, yuh struck it rich. (*Leans forward, regards her shoes furiously.*) But wot in 'ell are yuh wearin' them flip-flops fer? Want to raise the bloomin' fambly?

LADY. (*Regards shoes critically*) Well—you see, I didn't intend burglaring to-night. (*Rises.*) But a friend's auto brought me here—and seein'—the crib—was empty—well, here I am!

BURGLAR. (*Doubles up with noiseless mirth*) Oh, I say! My eye! That's a good un. (*Winks.*) I'm wise, all right. But yuh can't jolly me, Hungry. Uses a dope to fetch yer here, an' then tips him off

wid—"This is me home, Jawn! Good-night"! Gets out and sends the poor boob away. (*Chuckles.*) Oh, I don't know the ways of you little light-fingered ladies of the road—oh, no!

LADY. (*Joins him in noiseless laughter; sudden thought halts her*) You didn't see the auto, did you?

BURGLAR. Nawthin' past me but the scenery—I cum in frum the country, an' your bloke went city-wise, didn't he? (*Starts to look about; is light on his feet as a cat. Flashes light behind barrels, boxes, etc.*)

LADY. (*Slips across to house-door, switches on the lights*)

BURGLAR. (*Startled by flood of light*) Here, now—quit that. (*Squares on her fiercely.*)

LADY. It makes the work easier.

BURGLAR. (*Growls*) Wot work?

LADY. (*Unflinching; chin up*) Since we are burglars together—we—we will loot this house—as partners!

BURGLAR. (*After pause*) Yer a cool un.

LADY. Well, let's get busy.

(*He walks back toward ice-chest, she watching; then she tries to make the stairs at a rush to gain the telephone. He turns, grabs her by wrist, throws her heavily to floor, she sinks on one knee.*)

BURGLAR. Naw yuh don't. None of yer tricks on me. I'm not yer gas-wagon fren'—see? You stay right here—understand?

LADY. (*Winching with pain*) What are you afraid of?

BURGLAR. (*Quietly*) Oh, nothin'—abs'lutely nawthin', Hungry—but yuh stay right here' long side of me. (*Releases her.*) Now I know wot yuh are here fer. After a chest of silver; same as me. You

can't fool me. So better work on the level or I'll work alone. (*Examines his revolver thoughtfully.*)

LADY. (*Has dropped back near door; whirls round, beats her fists against it*) Oh, Bob! Bob! Why did I ever let you go?

BURGLAR. (*Puts gun away; grins*) So that's his name, is it? Well, I'm here and he ain't—so yuh better git back to the feed box, Hungry—take life easy, and make the best of yer substitute, while I takes a look round the place.

LADY. (*Recovering nerve*) No, I won't—That silver belongs to me—and I mean to keep it.

BURGLAR. (*Gruffs*) We'll see. (*Starts toward chest—LADY anticipates him, covers his approach by stepping in his path.*)

LADY. This house belongs to me, too.

BURGLAR. (*Sharply*) Wot's that?

LADY. (*Recovering lost ground*) To burgle—of course! I got here first. You've all the rest of the town to choose from. Leave this house to me. (*She coaxes him.*)

BURGLAR. (*Testily*) Aw, shet up! Wot d' yuh take me fer? Leave a sure-nuff swag fer an empty shack and a broken head?

LADY. Then be on the level! Take everything else in the "bloomin' swag"—but leave the silver for me.

BURGLAR. (*Humors her*) Very well, I'll divvy wid yuh, Hungry. Now yuh best swing yer lamps round here while I takes a look inside. (*Exits to kitchen.*)

LADY. (*Alone*) I must save that silver—but how—how! (*Looks swiftly about; drags rugs, wraps, etc., forward; piles them around the chest, then sits on it and attempts to spread her skirt out over it. Is smiling when the BURGLAR returns.*)

BURGLAR. (*Holding up loot-bag*) Not so bad fer a starter, eh? (*He moves noiselessly about, opening*

drawers, etc., takes whatever strikes his fancy. Is in good humor.)

LADY. I got tired burglarin'. I'm resting a minute.

BURGLAR. You'll need all yer strength standin' on yer legs goin' back to the city. (*LADY starts in alarm.*) Honest! (*Chuckles.*) These weddin' gifts are a cinch fer our trade. Everythin' new and shinin'—strictly up-to-date. But wot hurts me sometimes is to find that goods which promised to be genuwine is plated. Let's hope this silver turns out all right.

LADY. (*Complacently*) It's genuwine, thank you!

BURGLAR. (*Turns, smiles broadly on her*) How d'yuh know?

LADY. (*Gallantly*) Why—I read it! Newspaper story—a whole column! A society wedding, you know.

BURGLAR. (*Returns to his work*) That's wot I calls a public-spirited gent. Puts a line in the papers where he knows a fren's eye will spot it. Honest, the way I follows the sassiety columns would put a Vanderbilt on the blink. An' when they puts in a line statin' the waiiation of the goods, I calls that real brotherly love—huh, Hungry? (*Turns, regards her whimsically.*) Have yuh found the silver?

LADY. No.

BURGLAR. Where'd yuh look fer it?

LADY. Under the stairs, behind things—on top the ice-chest. Everywhere! Guess it hasn't come yet.

BURGLAR. (*Advances swiftly*) No? Wot's this yer perched on? (*Grabs her, swings her down and back of him.*)

LADY. (*Dancing with rage*) Let that chest alone! Don't touch it—you fiend!

BURGLAR. (*On knee, working neatly at lock*) We'll just have a peek inside. (*She slaps at his hand, he tosses her back.*) Keep cool, Hungry, keep cool.

(Throws back the lid.) Thar it is! *(Reaches in, brings up box containing silver—places it on floor and proceeds deftly to pry it open.)*

LADY. Give me my silver—give it to me! *(She dives for it.)*

BURGLAR. Cheese it, Hungry. *(Opens box, picks up silver pitcher, eyes it gloatingly.)* Say! Ain't she a charmer!

LADY. *(Going over his shoulder for it with her hand)* You will scratch it, you beast! *(He drops it in his bag, gathers up a handful—she attempts to duck under his arm.)* I'll get the spoons, anyway.

BURGLAR. *(Gruffly)* Hands off, Hungry. *(Throws her so that she drops sideways on the floor—she is almost in tears.)*

LADY. You promised to divide—and you don't keep your word.

BURGLAR. *(Still filling his bags)* Aw, shet up! *(Turns.)* Here! Catch them durn baby spoons.

LADY. *(Tucking them in her blouse)* I want a full half share!

BURGLAR. I'll divvy wid yuh later, see?

LADY. *(Dusting herself off)* I'd rather have my half now.

BURGLAR. *(Serenely unmoved)* I'll tote the stuff to the city and then give yuh yer share.

LADY. No! I want——

BURGLAR. Listen! It's my plan or none. Wot d' yuh say? *(Slings pack over his shoulder, picks up an empty one.)*

LADY. What can I say! You swiped the stuff from me. You know it's all mine—and I'm determined not to lose it. If I have to follow you to the ends of the earth, don't for a minute think you will ever lose sight of me—until you hand me over that silver! *(She jams hat on head, picks up raincoat.)*

BURGLAR. That's the way to talk! Keep that

style up, Hungry, and you'll win out yet. (*He starts away.*)

LADY. Where are you going now?

BURGLAR. To bat me peepers around the loft—
Comin' up?

LADY. No!

BURGLAR. (*On steps*) Well, yuh can't git into any mischief—but, remember, I'm watchin' yer. High-handed games don't work with me, Hungry—don't fergit that. (*She turns angrily away from him. Glance falls on ugly vase.*)

LADY. Wait a minute, please. (*Darts for vase.*)

BURGLAR. (*Mutters, surprised*) Wot the 'ell—

LADY. (*Holds up vase*) Put this with your loot, will you?

BURGLAR. Cheese it! Gee, yer a green thing to pick that durn ugly mug. Ain't wuth a brass nickel. (*Exits.*)

LADY. Just what I said, Aunt Julia! (*Holding vase dangling in one hand, listens to storm howl and sweep around the house.*) I must keep that wretch here—but how? How? (*Sudden inspiration; crows with glee.*) I have it! I'll serve him Bob's supper. Fatten the wretch for slaughter.

BURGLAR. (*Re-entering, descends stairs slowly*) Nawthin' up thar, Hungry, absolutely nawthin' but dust and picters—I'm too moral a man to be an art collector. We might as well be hoofin' it—(*She is hatted and has the ugly vase in her arms, holding it like a baby.*) Say! yer not goin' to tote that durn ugly mug?

LADY. You needn't care—it's not worth a brass nickel!

BURGLAR. (*Slings loot across shoulders*) Honest, yer the greenest, bummiest burglar I ever see, Hungry. (*Grins.*) But come along. I can't tuck the pianner in my pocket—an' it would be an awful shame to take that lady out in this storm without

a raincoat. (*Indicates the Venus.*) Come on, Hungry! Sorry I ain't got a car to offer—but I'll help yer keep yer feet.

LADY. (*Tagging behind*) Wait a minute. (*He turns.*) I'm awful hungry.

BURGLAR. (*Rough*) Aw, cut that out.

LADY. (*Eagerly*) I saw—a swell—supper in that ice-chest! Slick idea to clean it out before we hike. We may not have a chance to eat again for a long time. Be a sport! (*Softly—coming nearer him.*) I'd love most awfully to feed you.

BURGLAR. (*After pause*) Well—(*growls*)—I don't s'pose there's any great risk. All right, Hungry.

LADY. (*Cry of joy, smash of crockery*) Great!

BURGLAR. Say! Wot did I tell yuh? Never take nuthin' breakable—stick to metals—see?

LADY. I finished Aunt Julia!

BURGLAR. (*Barks*) Wot?

LADY. (*Stoops, shows him white pasteboard*) See? "From Aunt Julia." Read the card.

BURGLAR. (*Admiringly*) Say, you're the limit.

LADY. (*Gaily removes hat—glances at clock as she starts to arrange supper*) Am I? Just drag that table forward, will you—and fix chairs while I hunt food. (*Tosses her wraps one side.*) If I was slow finding silver, I *did* open my eyes to the crackers and cheese, didn't I? (*She gives him knives, etc.—and she arranges the plates.*)

BURGLAR. (*Awkwardly assisting*) You may be a bum burglar—but yer no slouch on looks!

LADY. Don't you jolly me.

BURGLAR. (*Abashed a little*) That's no kiddin'. There's nawthin' gaudy about yer style—and say! Listen, you got all the females I ever saw before skun a mile on looks. (*Grins.*) And got yer eye peeled fer the main chanct, too.

LADY. Really?

BURGLAR. Sure! You keep yer wits about yer and you'll make a hit yet—land a prize!

LADY. Prove it by handing over that silver!

BURGLAR. (*Testily*) Ah, fergit that silver, can't yuh? Wait till I fetch it home.

LADY. If I must—I must. (*Smiles on him.*) Sit down and help yourself. (*She shoves a plate of sandwiches to him. She starts to arrange chafing-dish.*)

BURGLAR. Wot's the name of that fancy get-up? (*Indicates with knife.*)

LADY. It is called a grill, I believe—a chafing-dish grill.

BURGLAR. (*Grins*) More like a frying-pan wid a college eddication!

LADY. Not bad, either! (*Peeps demurely, smiling at him round the chafing-dish.*)

BURGLAR. (*Mellowing under influence of food—waxes sentimental*) Say! Skirts never made a hit wid me before. Seen movie stars and everythin'. Just plain zero weather! But say—I'd give you the main chanct, all right. Get me? Well, wot d' yuh say? Huh?

LADY. I—I never flirt. (*But she peeps again. Is becoming interested in the BURGLAR as a man.*)

BURGLAR. Same here! Precisely. But I like yer style and yer general make-up. An' I'll say, yer no fool, either, Hungry.

LADY. Thank you! You're not bad looking yourself. Nice mouth—pleasant chin—your hair says you can't be thirty. Won't you please remove your mask?

BURGLAR. (*Sheepishly unmasks*) Go easy, now. Well, do you like me any better?

LADY. Your eyes are—nice! I'd think you a—hero—if you would only give me that silver!

BURGLAR. (*Pleased*) Be easy there! I'll treat yuh all right. But say! Why don't yuh quit this

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house-breakin' trade—— Nawthin' in it, absolutely nawthin'—fer you. Sure as death you'll git pinched yet. Look at yer to-night—that durn glass mug smashed—— (*His revolver drops to floor. In alarm she leaps up.*)

LADY. Oh, look out for that gun!

BURGLAR. (*Chuckles, picks it up*) Be easy there. That ole pop is busted. Just a scare gag fer fat men and wimmen. I don't take no chances bangin' off a noise that'll wake the neighbors.

(*LADY in a flash remembers the burglar alarm—glances toward shuttered windows.*)

LADY. (*Slips back in chair*) You scared me, all right.

BURGLAR. That's wot I say. You ain't suited to this game. (*He had placed gun on table—she reaches for it as he eats—slips it in back of her on chair.*) Your job is to git placed in some swell lay-out—and tip me off when the boss and the missus is out. Inside worker—git me?

LADY. It sounds—very thrilling—Mr.—Mr.—?

BURGLAR. Call me Bill. Just plain Bill. That'll do fer now.

LADY. All right, Mr. Bill. (*They 'risc, shake hands elaborately across the table.*)

BURGLAR. (*Again seated, attacks food*) With me, it's different. I cum frum wot you might say is a royal line of crooks!

LADY. Really?

BURGLAR. Yeh! Though be tactful where yuh mention that fact—see?

LADY. Naturally.

BURGLAR. Look at me to-night—I ain't ever fooled——

LADY. Have some more tea?

BURGLAR. I allus size up my man every time.

Why, look here! (*Takes out fat wallet and big diamond scarf-pin.*) A fren' of mine guv them to me to-night.

LADY. (*Giving him cup*) Nice friend, I should say.

BURGLAR. He was a round, fat-faced gent puffin' along down the road. "Let me give yuh a lift," I sez, inclined to be sociable. "Thank you heartily," sez he; least-way, I finds this wallet and the dimund in my hands when we parted. It's the plainest way of knowin' I had touched his sentiments. (*Sips tea out of spoon.*)

LADY. (*Rises, fetches sandwiches, glances quickly, covertly, at the clock.*) It's been a lucky day for you, hasn't it?

BURGLAR. Oh, nawthin' more than me usual. You see, I likes the trade and follows it successful. But then, I have me principles—I never rob none but swell layouts—and I've never been in trouble yet. (*Knocks on wood.*)

LADY. But aren't you afraid of the police?

BURGLAR. (*Winks elaborately*) Me nat'r'l gar-deens——

LADY. (*Slumps*) Good gracious! (*Weeps.*) Everybody helps you. And I want that silver so much! The one thing in the world I have ever longed for—and you—you stole it from me! (*Lays down head suddenly and weeps aloud.*)

BURGLAR. (*Bewildered*) Wot the 'ell! Shet up—shet up, will yuh, Hungry—— Oh, damn! Here, take yer durn silver—— (*Rises, tosses bag at her feet.*)

LADY. (*Leaps up, stoops and gathers it up in her arms*) Oh, you Prince of a burglar!

BURGLAR. (*Bashful*) I was only goin' to tote it fer yuh—honest. (*Places hand on her shoulder.*) I'm on the square with you, Hungry. You won't ever double-cross me?

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LADY. I promise, Mr. Bill. *(She slips back in her chair.)*

BURGLAR. I seem kind of cracked—actin' like this, but—I've never spoke soft to a woman before—I come to the place where I turned upside down, just like I could turn one of them wicker chairs. But if you ever call a turn on me, Hungry—

LADY. I won't. That I promise, faithful. Though we never meet again, you remember this—I'm your friend, Mr. Bill. *(She holds out her hand.)*

BURGLAR. *(Gently)* Ye'r my skirt now, see, Hungry. *(She draws back her hand. He attempts to recover it. She slips away from him—then begins a slow chase round the table—she just eluding him.)* Wait! Listen! S'help me, I'm on the level. An' to-morrer night I'll give yuh the whistle, and you come out in yer glad rags and we'll do the city together. Eat at a swell joint, where we can toddle without danger. Just outside the city—lights showin' in the river below. And I'll have a fur coat fer yuh, Hungry. I'll hook it before I see yuh again—wot d'yuh say, girlie?

LADY. I—I don't like dancing—— *(Nervously eluding him.)*

BURGLAR. But—*eats*, Hungry. Plates filled with fried chicken and everythin'! Refreshments that'll make your eyes pop—— Aw, say! Don't act so skittish. Show me a little sentiment, can't yuh?

LADY. *(Thoroughly alarmed)* I don't feel sentimental—Mr. Bill—I've got to have time to think of all you have said to me——

BURGLAR. Quit stringin' me—peaches! If yuh don't be nice to me to-night, how kin I tell how you'll act when I takes yuh out and introduces yuh to all me swell fren's? Make good now, Hungry. *(Grabs her; she struggles, beats his chest with her fists.)*

LADY. Let me go! Let me go! Let me go!

BURGLAR. Don't act so mad! I ain't goin' to

hurt yuh—but I ain't no fool. (*Clock begins striking the hour of ten.*)

LADY. Listen! Listen! He is coming!

(*Auto horn heard rapidly approaching the house.*)

BURGLAR. Lord! Quick! Beat it! (*He jumps for the front door.*)

LADY. No! No! Not that way! Quick—out through this way—— (*She hurries him out the back door. Both dash in kitchen as auto horn honks cheerfully—a moment later BOB enters with the suitcase—sees confusion—and no bride.*)

GROOM. Burglars! (*Cries wildly.*) Sylvia! Sylvia! (*Turns round like a top. Alarm starts to go off in kitchen—is smothered quickly. He starts toward the sound.*) Sylvia!

(*BRIDE enters with a rush.*)

GROOM. My precious girl! (*Sweeps her in his arms.*)

BRIDE. (*Gasps*) The silver!

GROOM. (*Sees open chest and looted box*) Burglars! (*Makes dash toward kitchen. She grabs him by coat-tail.*)

BRIDE. Don't you double-cross him!

GROOM. Sylvia! Great guns! She's frightened out of her wits.

BRIDE. No! You shan't touch him! He's running as fast as he can, poor thing—thoroughly disillusioned! (*Picks up his gun and mask—holds them out to the GROOM.*) There's his gun—there's his mask.

GROOM. But—Judas Priest! The silver!

BRIDE. Oh, yes—that, too! I saved the family silver—— (*She suddenly turns, falls in the GROOM's arms and clings to him desperately.*)

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GROOM. My precious! My precious——

(Wedding march peals out triumphantly as curtain quickly descends. Storm sweeps up with a crescendo blast.)

THE END

THE REJUVENATION OF AUNT MARY.

The famous comedy in three acts, by Anne Warner. 7 males, 6 females. Three interior scenes. Costumes modern. Plays $2\frac{1}{4}$ hours.

This is a genuinely funny comedy with splendid parts for "Aunt Mary," "Jack," her lively nephew; "Lucinda," a New England ancient maid of all work; "Jack's" three chums; the Girl "Jack" loves; "Joshua," Aunt Mary's hired man, etc.

"Aunt Mary" was played by May Robson in New York and on tour for over two years, and it is sure to be a big success wherever produced. We strongly recommend it. Price, 60 Cents.

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A pleasing comedy, in three acts, by Harry James Smith, author of "The Tailor-Made Man." 6 males, 6 females. One interior scene. Costumes modern. Plays $2\frac{1}{4}$ hours.

Mr. Smith chose for his initial comedy the complications arising from the endeavors of a social climber to land herself in the altitude peopled by hyphenated names—a theme permitting innumerable complications, according to the spirit of the writer.

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A most successful farce in three acts, by Frank Wyatt and William Morris. 5 males, 4 females. One interior scene stands throughout the three acts. Costumes modern. Plays $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

"Mrs. Temple's Telegram" is a sprightly farce in which there is an abundance of fun without any taint of impropriety or any element of offence. As noticed by Sir Walter Scott, "Oh, what a tangled web we weave when first we practice to deceive."

There is not a dull moment in the entire farce, and from the time the curtain rises until it makes the final drop the fun is fast and furious. A very exceptional farce. Price, 60 Cents.

THE NEW CO-ED.

A comedy in four acts, by Marie Doran, author of "Tempest and Sunshine," etc. Characters, 4 males, 7 females, though any number of boys and girls can be introduced in the action of the play. One interior and one exterior scene, but can be easily played in one interior scene. Costumes modern. Time, about 2 hours.

The theme of this play is the coming of a new student to the college, her reception by the scholars, her trials and final triumph.

There are three especially good girls' parts, Letty, Madge and Estelle, but the others have plenty to do. "Punch" Doolittle and George Washington Watts, a gentleman of color, are two particularly good comedy characters. We can strongly recommend "The New Co-Ed" to high schools and amateurs. Price, 30 Cents.

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BILLETED.

A comedy in 3 acts, by F. Tennison Jesse and H. Harwood. 4 males, 5 females. One easy interior scene. A charming comedy, constructed with uncommon skill, and abounds with clever lines. Margaret Anglin's big success. Amateurs will find this comedy easy to produce and popular with all audiences. Price, 60 Cents.

NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH.

A comedy in 3 acts. By James Montgomery. 5 males, 6 females. Costumes, modern. Two interior scenes. Plays 2½ hours.

Is it possible to tell the absolute truth—even for twenty-four hours? It is—at least Bob Bennett, the hero of "Nothing But the Truth," accomplished the feat. The bet he made with his business partners, and the trouble he got into—with his partners, his friends, and his fiancée—this is the subject of William Collier's tremendous comedy hit. "Nothing But the Truth" can be whole-heartedly recommended as one of the most sprightly, amusing and popular comedies that this country can boast. Price, 60 Cents.

IN WALKED JIMMY.

A comedy in 4 acts, by Minnie Z. Jaffa. 10 males, 2 females (although any number of males and females may be used as clerks, etc.). Two interior scenes. Costumes, modern. Plays 2½ hours. The thing into which Jimmy walked was a broken-down shoe factory, when the clerks had all been fired, and when the proprietor was in serious contemplation of suicide.

Jimmy, nothing else but plain Jimmy, would have been a mysterious figure had it not been for his matter-of-fact manner, his smile and his everlasting humanness. He put the shoe business on its feet, won the heart of the girl clerk, saved her erring brother from jail, escaped that place as a permanent boarding house himself, and foiled the villain.

Clean, wholesome comedy with just a touch of human nature, just a dash of excitement and more than a little bit of true philosophy make "In Walked Jimmy" one of the most delightful of plays. Jimmy is full of the religion of life, the religion of happiness and the religion of helpfulness, and he so permeates the atmosphere with his "religion" that everyone is happy. The spirit of optimism, good cheer, and hearty laughter dominates the play. There is not a dull moment in any of the four acts. We strongly recommend it.

Price, 60 Cents.

MARTHA BY-THE-DAY.

An optimistic comedy in three acts, by Julie M. Lippmann, author of the "Martha" stories. 5 males, 5 females. Three interior scenes. Costumes modern. Plays 2½ hours.

It is altogether a gentle thing, this play. It is full of quaint humor, old-fashioned, homely sentiment, the kind that people who see the play will recall and chuckle over to-morrow and the next day.

Miss Lippmann has herself adapted her very successful book for stage service, and in doing this has selected from her novel the most telling incidents, infectious comedy and homely sentiment for the play, and the result is thoroughly delightful. Price, 60 Cents.

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Golden Days

A comedy of youth, in four acts, by Sidney Toler and Marion Short. 7 males, 10 females. Three interior scenes. Costumes modern. Plays 2½ hours.

"Golden Days" is a play with all the charm of youth. It enjoyed a run of sixteen weeks in Chicago with Patricia Collingé in the leading role, and was then brought to the Gaiety Theatre, New York, with Helen Hayes in the part of "Mary Anne." Price, 75 cents.

Come Out of the Kitchen

A charming comedy in 3 acts, adapted by A. E. Thomas from the story of the same name by Alice Duer Miller. 6 males, 5 females. Three interior scenes. Costumes, modern. Plays 2½ hours.

"Come Out of the Kitchen," with Ruth Chatterton in the leading role, made a notable success on its production by Henry Miller at the Cohan Theatre, New York. It was also a great success at the Strand Theatre, London. A most ingenious and entertaining comedy, and we strongly recommend it for amateur production.

Price, 75 cents

His Majesty Bunker Bean

A farcical comedy in four acts. By Lee Wilson Dodd, from the novel by Harry Leon Wilson. 12 males, 6 females. Four interior scenes. Costumes, modern. Plays 2½ hours. Those who have laughed immoderately at Harry Leon Wilson's story will be greatly amused by the play, which tells the story of a cowed and credulous youth who became kingly when he was tricked into believing himself a reincarnation of Napoleon. "His Majesty Bunker Bean," with Taylor Holmes in the title role, was brought to the Astor Theatre, New York, after a run of 25 weeks in Chicago. A delightful and wholesome farce comedy with no dull moments.

Price, 75 cents

A Full House

A farcical comedy in three acts. By Fred Jackson. 7 males, 7 females. One interior scene. Modern costumes. Plays 2½ hours. This newest and funniest of all farces was written by Fred Jackson, the well-known short story writer, and is backed up by the prestige of an impressive New York success and the promise of unlimited fun presented in the most attractive form. A cleverer farce has not been seen for many a long day. "A Full House" is a house full of laughs.

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Clarence

A comedy in four acts by Booth Tarkington, author of "The Man From Home," "Penrod," "The Country Cousin," etc. 5 males, 5 females. Two interior scenes. Costumes, modern. Plays 2½ hours.

Clarence has no medals, no shoulders bars, no great accomplishment. One of the "five million," he served where he was sent—though it was no further than Texas. As an entomologist he found—on this side of the ocean—no field for his specialty in the great war. So they set him to driving mules.

Now, reduced to civil life and seeking a job, he finds a position in the home of one, Wheeler, a wealthy Engelwood man with a family. And because he'd "been in the army" he becomes guide, philosopher and friend to the members of that same agitated and distracted family group. Clarence's position is an anomalous one. He mends the bathroom plumbing, he tunes the piano, he types—off stage—he plays the saxophone. And around him revolves such a group of characters as only Booth Tarkington could offer. It is a real American comedy; and the audience ripples with appreciative and delighted laughter.

Those marvelous young people, Cora and Bobby Wheeler, are portrait sketches warranted to appeal to every one but the originals. Their truth will be lost on the "Flapper" and the "prep" school youth, but to their parents and guardians, to all, indeed, who have emerged from the serious, self-conscious, period of adolescence, they will be an enduring joy.

"Clarence" is a real delight. It is as American as "Huckleberry Finn" or pumpkin pie. It is as delightful as any native comedy which has tried to lure the laughter of this country in the last ten seasons.

Price, 75 cents.

Three Live Ghosts

A comedy in three acts by Frederick Isham and Max Marcia. 6 males, 4 females (2 policemen). One interior scene stands throughout the three acts. Costumes, modern. Plays 2½ hours.

"Three Live Ghosts" is brim full of fun and humor and is sure to keep audiences in gales of laughter. The New York critics described it as the most ingenious and amusing comedy of the season and genuinely and heartily funny. It played a full season in New York and then toured the big cities. A lively comedy of merit we can strongly recommend for amateur production.

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